

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DODER ARTICLE ON SOMALIA JULY 18.

REF: MOGADISCIO 1048

SUBJECT ARTICLE ENTITLED "SOMALIA'S SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM: A BIT SOVIET BUT STILL AFRICAN" WAS POUCHED JULY 18. LENGTHY ARTICLE (C.24 COLUMN INCHES) IN FACT DEALS ONLY LIGHTLY WITH QUESTION OF SOVIET INFLUENCE AND IS MUCH MORE CONCERNED WITH SOMALIA'S OWN VARIETY OF SOCIALISM. GIST OF ARTICLE IS THAT SOMALI SOCIALISM, WHILE NOMINALLY "SCIENTIFIC LIBERALLY BLENDS AFRICAN AND ISLAMIC ELEMENTS WITH MARXIST PRINCIPLES. BULK OF ARTICLE DEALS WITH GSDR'S EFFORTS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS OF DROUGHT AND UNDER-DEVELOPMENT. FOLLOWING ARE SALIENT PARAGRAPHS ON SUBJECT OF SOVIET INFLUENCE:

"THE SOMALIS SEEM AWARE THAT EXTENDING RIGHTS TO THE SOVIETS TO OPERATE CERTAIN FACILITIES AT BERBERA IS THE PRICE THEY HAVE TO PAY FOR THE KREMLIN'S AID.

"THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT HAS SET AS ITS MAIN GOAL THE PROMOTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HAS CONCLUDED THAT THIS MUST BE DONE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF 'SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM.'

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"PRESIDENT MOHAMED SIAD BARRE'S IDEOLOGY WOULD MAKE A EUROPEAN SOCIALIST CRINGE. HIS COCKTAIL OF MARXIST CONCEPTS AND ISLAMIC TRADITIONS BRINGS DISCREET, CONTEMPTUOUS SMILES TO THE LIPS OF COMMUNIST DIPLOMATS HERE WHENEVER

THEY ARE ASKED PRIVATELY TO EVALUATE SOMALIA 'SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM.'"

"TO GUARD AGAINST FOREIGN IDEAS, THE GOVERNMENT REQUIRES ALL OFFICIALS, DIPLOMATS OR STUDENTS WHO HAVE LIVED ABROAD TO ENROLL ON RETURN AT THE INSTITUTE FOR REEVALUATION OF NATIONAL HERITAGE AND MENTAL DECOLONIALIZATION. MOST STUDENTS THAT LEAVE SOMALIA STUDY IN EASTERN EUROPE."

"SIAD BARRE'S AUTHORITARIAN RULE AND MARXIST RHETORIC, PLUS THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE SUPPLIED HIS ARMY WITH ARMS AND ADVISERS FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, LEAD MOST RESIDENT DIPLOMATS TO CONCLUDE THAT SOMALIA IS EITHER A SOVIET SATELLITE OR ON THE WAY TO BECOMING ONE.

"A MINORITY VIEW, HOWEVER, HOLDS THAT THE SOMALIS ARE NOT IN THE POCKET OF MOSCOW AND THAT THEY ARE NOT FULLY AWARE OF THE EXTENT OF SOVIET PENETRATION.

'SOMALIA, IN THIS VIEW, CANNOT AFFORD TO BE CHOOSY: IT IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S POOREST COUNTRIES

"..THE SAD THING ABOUT IT,' SAID A DIPLOMAT OVER DRINKS

ON A LETHARGIC TROPICAL EVENING RECENTLY, 'IS THAT NOBODY REALLY CARES ABOUT SOMALIA. BOTH THE RUSSIANS AND THE AMERICANS LOOK ON SOMALIA AS A PIECE OF STRATEGICALLY LOCATED REAL ESTATE. THIS IS WHY THE RUSSIANS ARE HERE. THEY NEED COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER FACILITIES FOR THEIR INDIAN OCEAN FLEET. AND NOW THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE HERE, THE AMERICANS GET EXCITED ABOUT SOMALIA.'"

"THERE IS ABOUT MOGADISHU A FLAVOR OF EARLY SOVIET CITIES. THE REGIMENTATION IS ACCOMPANIED BY TOUGH POLICE AND SECURITY CONTROLS. SOMALIS ARE AFRAID OF MEETING FOREIGNERS. THOSE RELUCTANT TO 'VOLUNTEER' FOR CAMPAIGNS UNCLASSIFIED

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MOUNTED BY THE GOVERNMENT ARE GIVEN PROPER 'INCENTIVES' AND ULTIMATELY MAY FACE ARREST.

"WHERE DISSENT IS FIRM AND OPEN, THE GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO USE FULL FORCE TO QUASH IT - AS WHEN IT EXECUTED 10 SHEIKHS WHO OPENLY OPPOSED LEGAL REFORMS DEALING WITH INHERITANCE AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

"STERN SOMALI OFFICIALS, NERVOUS ABOUT INQUISITIVE

VISITORS, MINIMIZE THE NUMBER OF SOVIET ADVISERS HERE. BUT THE VISITORS ARE IMMEDIATELY AWARE THAT SOVIET PRESENCE IS A FACT OF LIFE WHEN THEY ARE APPROACHED BY CHILDREN ASKING FOR MONEY: 'ODIN SHILLING, TOVARISH,' - 'ONE SHIL-

LING, COMRADE' - SAY THE SMALL BAREFOOT BOYS EXTENDING
THEIR HANDS." KISSINGER

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